

Meeting Minutes
City of Medina Parks and Recreation Commission
April 19, 2004

Present: Chair Joseph Brazen, Vice-Chair (VC) Heija Nunn, Lisa Fleischman, Tim O'Brien and Susannah Stuart

Absent/Excused: Connie Gerlitz

Staff Present: Director of Public Works (DPW) Shel Jahn and Recording Secretary Carol Wedlund

Chair Brazen called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. He noted PRC member Gerlitz was absent and excused.

Announcements / Discussion

VC Nunn wanted playground equipment included in the May meeting agenda. Chair Brazen announced Medina Days would be celebrated the second weekend in August. DPW Jahn added there had been some discussion of a celebration next year to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Medina's incorporation, with the possibility of the PRC becoming involved in planning this event. He stated it might be a good opportunity next year to celebrate the 50th anniversary in conjunction with Medina Days. Chair Brazen suggested perhaps some flowers or a tree could be planted in commemoration of the 50th anniversary celebration. He indicated the actual anniversary date was in July of 2005. There had been discussion of four concerts in the park every Tuesday for a month beforehand, with the final one being held in conjunction with Medina Days. Four generations of band songs had been suggested for the four-concert series. Also, a nonprofit corporation had been established for Medina Days, and there had been discussion of appointing the PRC as directors, rather than city staff. VC Nunn suggested the PRC could be an advisory committee to the Medina Days Committee. She also commented the advantage of a nonprofit corporation was that patron donations would be tax deductible. Chair Joseph added proof of insurance for the different vendors was furnished to the city each year before Medina Days. He gave a brief history of Medina Days, adding the City Manager wanted to include the PRC to get them more involved. VC Nunn suggested orders could be taken for pictures of Medina homes 50 years ago when it was incorporated. They could be sold and the profits could be given to either Medina Days or to the PRC. Also, Medina had at least one citizen who would be 100 years old, and perhaps the celebration could include centenarian residents. She recommended soliciting residents who had lived in Medina when it was incorporated for contributions, and volunteered to take care of the mailing. VC Nunn also suggested selling maps and other real estate-related items as another way of raising money.

DPW Jahn encouraged PRC members to consider the workload they already had, as taking on responsibility of the 50th anniversary celebration might be too much. Chair Brazen stated the city would support such involvement, but the PRC should run it. VC Nunn added it would be a good way for the PRC to obtain some visibility. It would still be resident-driven, because that was what comprised the PRC. PRC member Fleischman suggested this responsibility could be taken on separately, rather than being included in the monthly PRC meetings. Chair Brazen suggested the PRC could meet at his home for planning meetings. He also explained all the donation money collected was spent on Medina Days activities such as the boat rides and the concert in the park. VC Nunn suggested each of the parks could be involved in some way. Passports for children could self-stamp their passports at a station in each park.

DPW Jahn announced new PRC members Fleischman and Stuart had been taken on a guided tour of the parks, and had been impressed.

VC Nunn inquired about the unmarked trail from 79th to Evergreen Point Road, and thought it was owned by a resident to the north who was not paying taxes for that particular parcel, due to an open space exemption. She suggested DPW Jahn investigate it as an extension to the Indian Trail. DPW Jahn volunteered to review parcel maps to see how that property was identified.

Chair Brazen recalled two years ago there had been a fishing derby in Medina Park. DPW Jahn stated the water quality was extremely poor due to algae and the water temperature was probably too high to support the species of fish desired for fishing. Cleaning/dredging the pond was a project that would not be completed by Medina Days. Chair Brazen recalled some of the fish had died upon shock of being dumped into the pond, and perhaps they could be sat out for a day beforehand.

Approval of March 15, 2004 Minutes

Commission member Nunn moved, seconded by Commission member Fleischman, to approve the Parks and Recreation Commission minutes of March 15, 2004, which were unanimously approved.

PARK UPDATES

Park Updates – VC Nunn inquired whether cleanup of Lake Lane was on the PW crew's agenda. She also mentioned Viewpoint Park might need some maintenance work. PRC member O'Brien mentioned there was no place to park at Viewpoint Park, due to construction vehicle parking. DPW Jahn stated construction workers for the Simonyi site had been allowed to park there. The Council had asked that signs be installed in all park lots saying for park use only. Signs had not yet been installed at Viewpoint Park and around the corner from there at the dock parking lot. However, the MPD was enforcing in areas where the signs had been installed.

PRC member Fleischman announced the dog brochures were in place.

OLD BUSINESS

Cell Tower – Chair Brazen inquired about the cell tower. DPW Jahn furnished background information, and explained why a building permit was needed for safety reasons. He noted the Hearing Examiner had granted a variance to surpass the cell tower height restrictions, and the city had appealed to Superior Court. T-Mobile apparently believes that the hearing examiner's decision will be upheld, thus started construction. but without a permit. The Council passed an ordinance changing the language to the Building Code, so T-Mobile would be required to obtain a building permit. The city shut down the construction project pending the issuance of the permit.

Update on Medina Beach Park Bulkhead Rehabilitation and General Improvements Project – DPW Jahn noted the PRC packet included a copy of the original memo provided to the Council in September of 2003 regarding the Medina Beach Park Bulkhead Rehabilitation and General Improvements Project. He had also included a copy of the April 6, 2004 memo to the Council providing an update on the project. He noted what was driving most of the project was the permitting process and associated mitigation. He envisioned see-through decking to allow passage of light, and a pedestrian-viewing fish habitat area. The fish habitat area was part of the permit process. There would be a fairly sizable dock area with two picnic tables. The other dock at the park would include a four-foot wide walkway to a t-shaped dock for access by Mercer Island Marine Patrol. After all permits are obtained work would commence. Additionally, the city would work on upland features, such as irrigation, French drains, installing proper path accesses, handicapped access, picnic benches, park benches and more plantings. Chair Brazen inquired if federal funds might be available to help with the ADA improvements or whether the city might qualify for substantial tax credits. DPW Jahn replied he had not investigated it, but there might be possibilities. VC Nunn stated a grant would require research and grant writing.

DPW Jahn explained the city was presently going through the design process with the regulatory agencies. After that, he would submit the applications for the permits. There was a fish window from the middle of April through the middle of July in which construction could not take place. He explained whether or not construction would begin this year depended upon the speed of the agencies. DPW Jahn envisioned the fish habitat area and docks to be a model for the city and for the area.

Update on Landscaping Work for Indian Trail – DPW Jahn provided an update on the status of the Indian Trail landscaping work. He explained gravel was needed underneath the Trail for proper winter support. Wood chips would cover the meandering trail surface. However, he was short on manpower, due to an employee injury and other requirements. This employee had been injured for months and was on light duty.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of Applications for Vacant Parks and Recreation Commission Position No. 7 – DPW Jahn stated he knew two of the applicants fairly well, and had talked on the phone with the third one. He recommended time lived in Medina as a potential criteria for consideration. DPW Jahn suggested the PRC make a recommendation to the Mayor, who would discuss it with the Council. Following discussion, PRC member O'Brien moved, seconded by VC Nunn, to recommend Steve Brustkern to fill Position No. 7 on the PRC, and the vote was unanimously in favor. VC Nunn moved, seconded by PRC Stuart, to recommend Roger Ngouenet as the second alternate in case the Mayor did not choose the PRC's first choice, and the motion carried unanimously. DPW Jahn stated a personalized park tour would give any new member a good historical perspective on Medina's parks as well as some of the policy issues faced by the PRC.

Review of Assignments of Parks / Nature Preserve Oversight Responsibilities – DPW Jahn requested that PRC members review their oversight responsibility park assignments, and suggested the issue could be raised again when they had full membership. He promised to place park oversight responsibility assignments on the agenda for discussion at the next PRC meeting.

Discussion of New Parks and Recreation Commission Ordinance Proposal – DPW Jahn stated Ordinance No. 711, which amended MMC Chapter 2.40 and governed Medina's Board of Park Commissioners, had been adopted at the March 8, 2004 Council meeting. He had included a revised copy in the packet which reflected the PRC's desired changes. Following discussion, PRC member O'Brien moved the underlined ordinance language be changed for Section 2.40.020(C) Removal, to "Any member absent for more than three consecutive regular meetings or five meetings during a calendar year may be removed from the Parks and Recreation Board by the Mayor with the prior consent of the City Council", and the motion carried unanimously. DPW Jahn promised to write a cover letter and forward the ordinance modifications identified by the PRC for the May Council agenda.

Absence of PRC O'Brien for May 2004 Meeting -- PRC member O'Brien indicated he would be out of town for the May 2004 PRC meeting.

Discussion of Dog Control in Medina Park Ordinance Proposal – DPW Jahn referred to his suggested cover memo in the packet regarding recommended changes to MMC Chapter 12.24, Public Parks. He had also attached the recommended changes to MMC Chapter 12.24, Public Parks. With PRC permission, the cover memo would be forwarded to the Council with pictures showing the damage done by dogs in Medina Park. DPW Jahn explained signs would be erected to depict both on-leash and off-leash areas. The logical point for the dividing lines was the stream that flowed through the Park. The first meeting would be to determine whether the Council was willing to consider limiting the dog off-leash area of Medina Park to the area east of the stream and ponds which divided the Park. The west side of the Park would not be off limits to dogs, but in this area a dog would need to be on a leash and remain on the walking paths. If the Council was in favor of entertaining a change, the formal process would include a public hearing and advertising in the quarterly Medina Newsletter. He suggested the PRC would want to defend their proposed action at the Council public hearing. PRC member Stuart suggested an informational and feedback survey be conducted of Medina residents to make them aware of the problem. Perhaps the survey could be preceded with pictures of the damage done by dogs in the Park. DPW Jahn suggested part of the cover memo to the Council could include how to make the public aware of the dog control proposal, including the survey. Further, an article in the quarterly Medina Newsletter could indicate the Council was considering dog control in Medina Park, and state the reasons. VC Nunn suggested it be approved as a trial six-month ordinance. Discussion of the proposed ordinance could be in a May public hearing, with a specific six-month expiration date.

PRC member O'Brien inquired whether Fairweather Park should be the place for dogs to run on leash instead. DPW Jahn replied many Medina residents owned "water" dogs, and there was no pond in Fairweather Park for the animals. Further, Fairweather had many more sensitive areas than Medina Park.

Following discussion, the PRC agreed with DPW Jahn's suggested changes under Section 12.24.010(H) to add to the first sentence, "Except as noted below in 12.40.020 (Medina Beach Park) and 12.40.030 (Medina Park), no", and continue with the rest of that sentence.

PRC member Nunn moved, seconded by PRC member Fleischman, to remove the words, "with no distance restriction for pets" from paragraph "A" in new suggested Section 12.24.030, as follows:

"Pet Rules Applying to Medina Park. The following rules shall apply to and be enforced in Medina Park:

- A. The area to the east of the stream (bridges) and ponds which divide Medina Park shall be designated an off-leash area ~~with no distance restriction for pets~~. However, all pets in this area of the Park must be within positive voice control of their owner or handler and must respond promptly to the commands of the owner or handler.
- B. The area to the west of the stream (bridges) and ponds which divide Medina Park shall be designated an on-leash, on-paths only area for pets."

Discussion of Parks and Recreation Commission Rules and Regulations – PRC member Nunn moved to table discussion of PRC Rules and Regulations until PRC member Gerlitz could be present, seconded by PRC member Fleischman, and the motion carried unanimously.

Strategic Planning / Vision – Short and Long Range Parks Commission Goals/Objectives and Budgeting – DPW Jahn stressed the PRC needed to tackle the issue of short and long term goals and objectives for a better overall vision, and for associated budgeting for Medina's Parks and Fairweather Nature Preserve. He suggested a number of different enhancements the PRC could consider for Council approval and funding. He explained projected plans to dredge the stream in Medina Park to reduce flooding of downstream residents, increase water quality and improve amenities around the ponds. DPW Jahn noted this year's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) would be in Council packets the following day and must be submitted to the State by the end of June. He noted the CIP was not the budget document, but rather one of vision for long and short term goals and objectives. The CIP was the authorization document which was then appropriated for in the budget. PRC member Nunn wanted playground equipment included in the budget, and promised to provide play structure estimates the following day. Chair Brazen indicated there had

been no vote. Besides, with the new PRC members coupled with having enough time for inclusion, the playground equipment would have to wait until 2005. DPW Jahn stated the PRC could always request a budget amendment of the Council.

Chair Brazen requested the PRC meet for a vision meeting at his house toward the end of May after the new PRC member came aboard. It was suggested pictures be furnished for this brainstorming session which would include discussion of irrigation, plants, flowers, trees and monuments. He reminded members to bring their calendars to the May PRC meeting. DPW stated before that meeting, each PRC member might want to review the previous Fairweather Park proposals. Chair Brazen suggested including the proposals under New Business as an orientation for new PRC members.

Quarterly Medina Newsletter Article – PRC Nunn suggested including an article in the Quarterly Medina Newsletter inviting residents to attend PRC meetings.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting – The next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting was scheduled at 7:00 p.m. on May 17, 2004.

Adjournment – By common consent, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Minutes taken by

Caroll P. Wedlund
Recording Secretary